

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 05442 020520Z

15

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /075 W

----- 051420

R 020400Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5175

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 5442

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LA, UR

SUBJ: BUILD-UP OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN LAOS

REF: A) MOSCOW 10414

B) FBIS BK 291241Z AUG 75

1. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY FORMER LAO AMBASSADOR LA NORINDR JUST BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FROM MOSCOW ABOUT SOVIET DISPATCH OF 250 TECHNICIANS TO LAOS (REF A) HAS PROVED OUT. WE BELIEVE THERE COULD NOW BE AS MANY AS 700 TO 900 SOVIETS (PROBABLY INCLUDING A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS) IN THE COUNTRY, BASED NOT ONLY AT VIENTIANE AND SAM NEUA BUT AT SEVERAL PROVINCIAL LOCATIONS AS WELL, INCLUDING PHONG SAVANH ON PLAIN OF JARS. IN VIENTIANE, SOVIETS ARE IN PROCESS OF TAKING OVER LARGE MOTEL-STYLE COMPOUND NEAR AIRPORT WHICH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 05442 020520Z

IS OWNED BY FORMER USG CONTRACTOR CONTINENTAL AIR SER-

VICES, INC. THE FACILITY IS IDEAL FOR HOUSING AIR-
AND GROUND-CREWS.

2. SUBJECT OF SOVIET PRESENCE HAS TAKEN ON ADDITIONAL
PROMINENCE IN LAST FEW DAYS BECAUSE OF AN INTERVIEW
SUPPOSEDLY GRANTED BY PGNU ACTING DEPPRIMIN/FONMIN PHOUNE
SIPASEUTH TO BANGKOK POST (CIRCULATION OF WHICH HAS
BEEN BANNED IN LAOS SINCE MID-JULY) AND PUBLISHED
AUGUST 28. LEAD SAYS PHOUNE " ADMITTED THAT THERE ARE
CURRENTLY ABOUT 1,500 SOVIET EXPERTS AIDING LAOS IN
DIFFERENT FIELDS 'BUT WITHOUT ANY STRINGS ATTACHED
UNLIKE THE UNITED STATES'."

3. ON DAY FOLLOWING PUBLICATION, LAO FOREIGN MINISTRY
IN AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT (REF B) "SOLEMNLY DENIE(D)
THE VICIOUS NEWS REPORT" OF PHOUNE'S REMARKS. CURIOUSLY,
DENIAL REFERS TO "AFP REPORTS" OF THOSE REMARKS CARRIED
IN AN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BANGKOK PAPER, WHEREAS BANGKOK
POST VERSION PURPORTED TO DERIVE FROM AUGUST 26 "SPECIAL
INTERVIEW" OF PHOUNE BY ITS OWN CORRESPONDENT NORASET
MEE-ISRARA. WE SUPPOSE BANGKOK POST IS CAPABLE OF
HAVING FABRICATED INTERVIEW (AND, EXCEPT FOR LAO INEFFI-
CIENCY AND INCONSISTENCY, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHY
PHOUNE SHOULD HAVE GRANTED AN INTERVIEW TO A PAPER
THAT IS BANNED HERE), BUT PATHET LAO ARE EQUALLY CAPABLE
OF ISSUING A FALSE DENIAL, PARTICULARLY IF SOVIETS
PRESSURED THEM TO DO SO.

4. WHATEVER THE CASE, SOVIET EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAVE
BEEN MOST DEFENSIVE WHENEVER WE OR OTHER WESTERNERS
HAVE RAISED SUBJECT WITH THEM; THEY TRY TO DISMISS
ANY TALK OF "BUILD-UP" AS NOTHING MORE THAN RESULT OF
A CHINESE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN. THEY HAVE ADMITTED
TO ONLY ABOUT 300 SOVIETS IN LAOS, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT
FIGURE WAS SURPASSED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. SOVIET CHARGE
CHMANEVSKI AT MALAYSIAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION AUGUST
31 WOULD NOT ADMIT EVEN TO THIS NUMBER; HE TOLD SEVERAL
DISBELIEVING LISTENERS THAT TOTAL OF ALL SOVIET EMPLOYEES
AND DEPENDENTS IN LAOS IS ABOUT 100.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VIENTI 05442 020520Z

5. FOR MOSCOW: IF YOUR RELATIONS WITH REMAINING STAFF
OF LAO EMBASSY PERMIT, WE WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN
ANY INFORMATION YOU CAN OBTAIN ON SUBJECT OF SOVIET
PRESENCE IN LAOS AND PLANS FOR ITS FURTHER AUGMENTA-
TION. EVEN ROUND FIGURES ON RECENT VISA-ISSUANCE TO
SOVIET NATIONALS WOULD BE HELPFUL.
CORCORAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975VIENTI05442
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750302-0176
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750990/aaaadchh.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MOSCOW 10414
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BUILD-UP OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN LAOS
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, LA, UR
To: STATE MOSCOW
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006